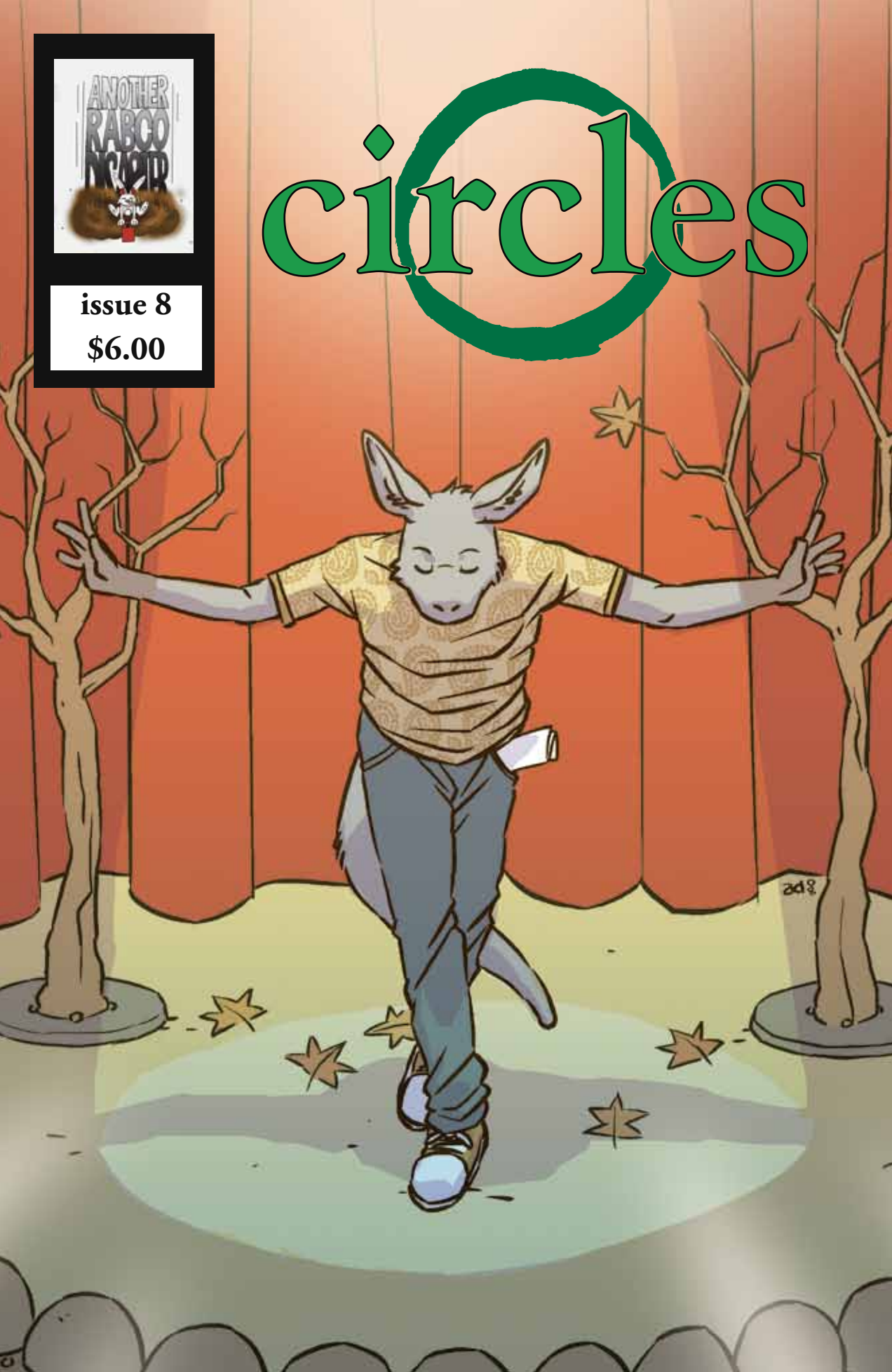
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issue 8
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winter 2002

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crafty marketing fox
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From the Editor's Desk

Four years ago today, I got married to another man. And as I'm sure you read from the news reports, internet blogs, and made-for-TV movies afterwards, the riots, food shortages, hurricanes, comet collisions, and earthquakes ended the world after gay marriage was legalized in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Four years ago today, I took the hand of the love of my life. And just like the comics say, the sex dried up right there. No steamy trysts in cheap motels in Jersey, no random blow jobs in the bathroom of a local restaurant, no kinky leather-bound hardcore nasty bareback tied to a bed. Yep, all gone.

Four years ago today, I pledged my heart, soul, and body to the best man I know. And just like the statistical average for straight marriage, we divorced two years later leaving 1.2 children to wonder why mommy and daddy didn't love them and beginning a plot to jockey one parent against the other with lines like "Well, MOMMY lets me stay up to 9 P.M. playing Grand Theft Auto on school nights," guaranteed to create yet another generation of spoiled rotten brats who will hopefully be arrested for murdering another of their schoolmates at age 14, taking one of them out of the gene pool at least.

Four years ago today, all I did was make something legal that I knew I would do anyway if some bogus government agency gave me a piece of paper or not. And I wouldn't trade my fox for anything in the world. (Oh, and all that stuff above, other than getting married to the love of my life and pledging my eternal soul, that's made up.)

Comics Update:

Eight issues of Circles have come and gone. Seventeen issues of Spooo Presents have too! Buying these comics helps us continue to produce them. (It also helps pay for the mountain of debt we've managed to accumulate over the years; taking two to three years just to break even on these books isn't uncommon.) We appreciate your support and encourage you to spread the word by telling a friend about the stories you love. We couldn't be here without you.

Check out the new Circles website, recently redesigned by our own K-9, at http://www.rabbitvalley.com/circles. Or, hit our official FurAffinity account, user name "RabbitValley". We've got behind the scenes pictures, sketches, comic previews, and more to share.

If You Need Help:

I know this information was in the last issue of Circles, but it bears repeating. The Network / La Red is dedicated to helping gay, lesbian, and transgendered people in an abusive relationship. You can also help others by donating to this organization.

The Network / La Red
PO Box 6011
Boston, MA 02114
www.thenetworklared.org
Emergency Hotline: 617-423-SAFE

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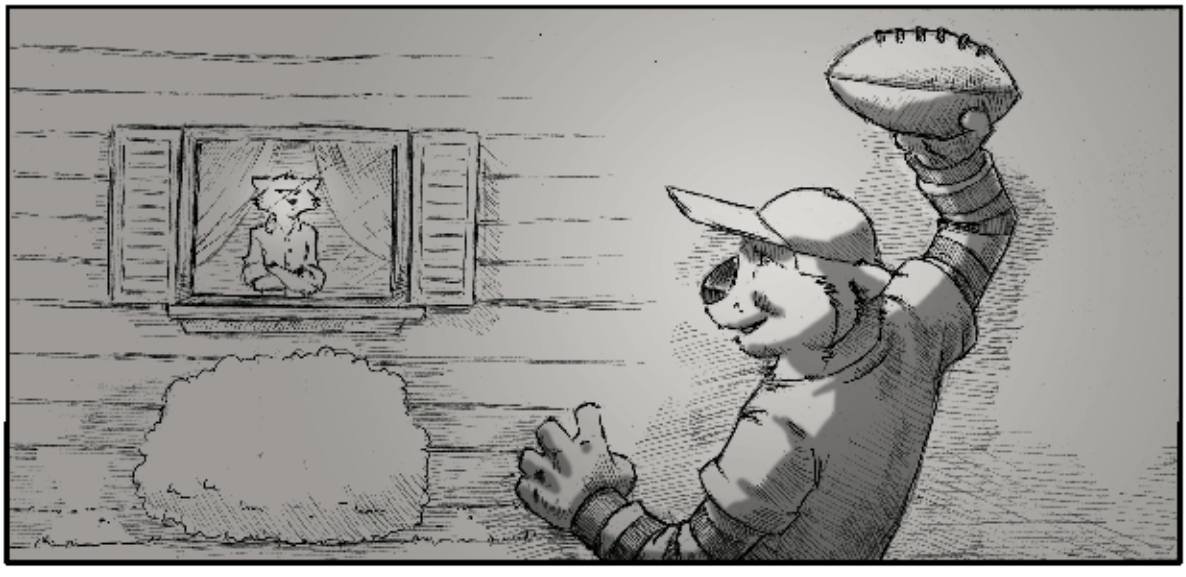
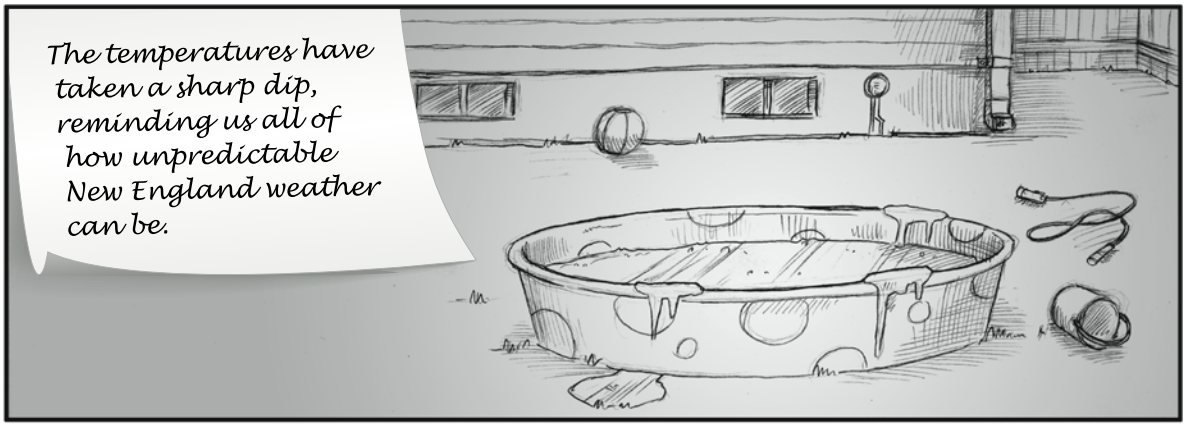
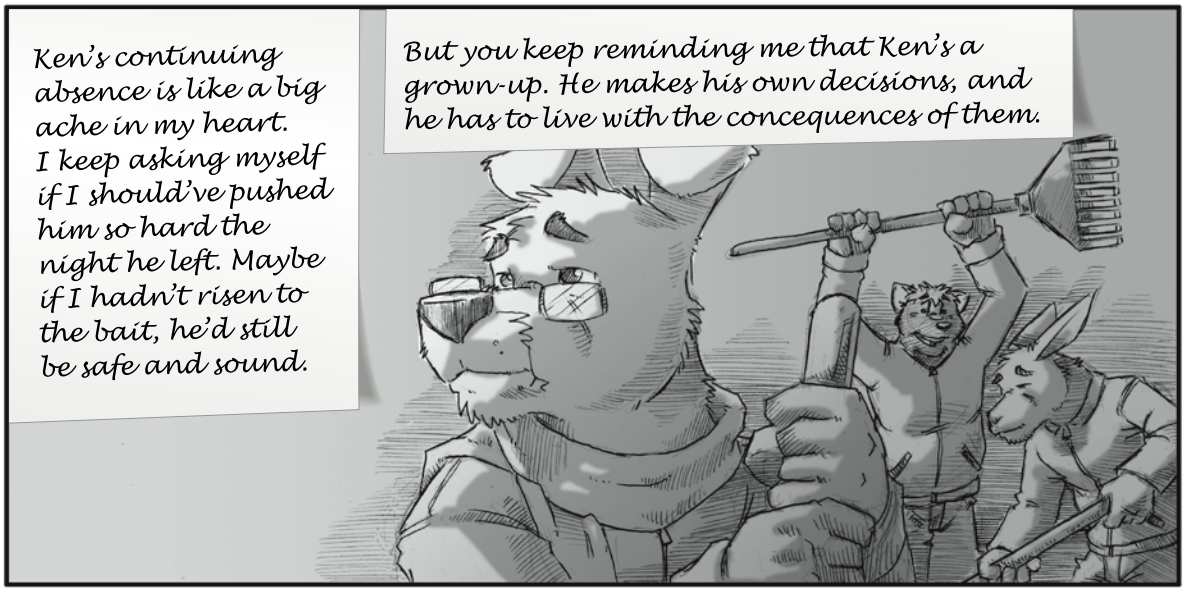


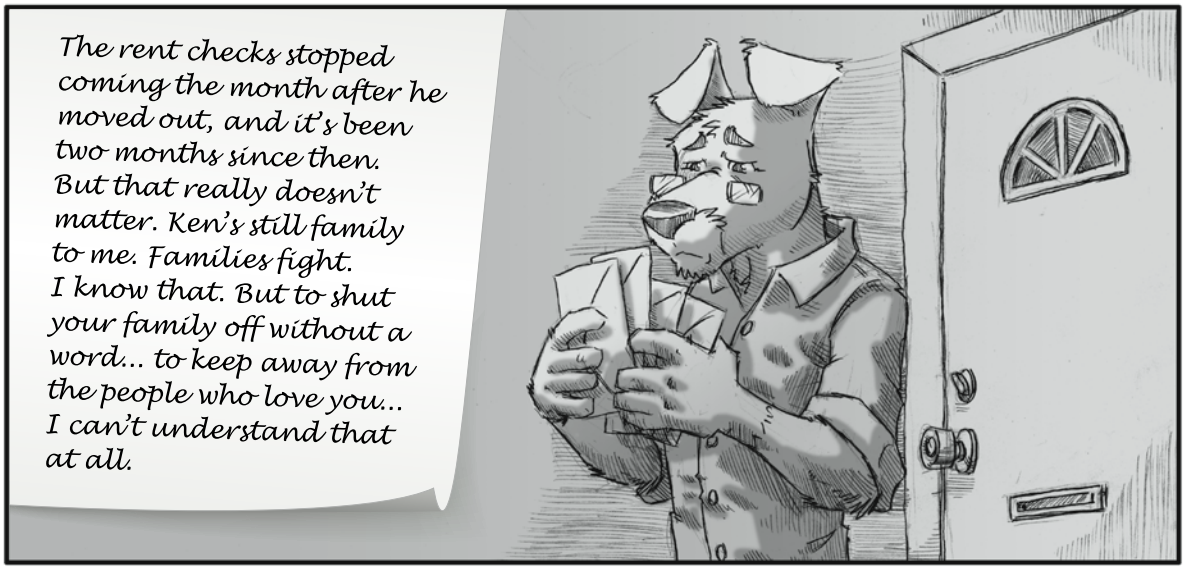
Dear Douglas,
Can it really be autumn already?


The temperatures have taken a sharp dip, reminding us all of how unpredictable New England weather can be.

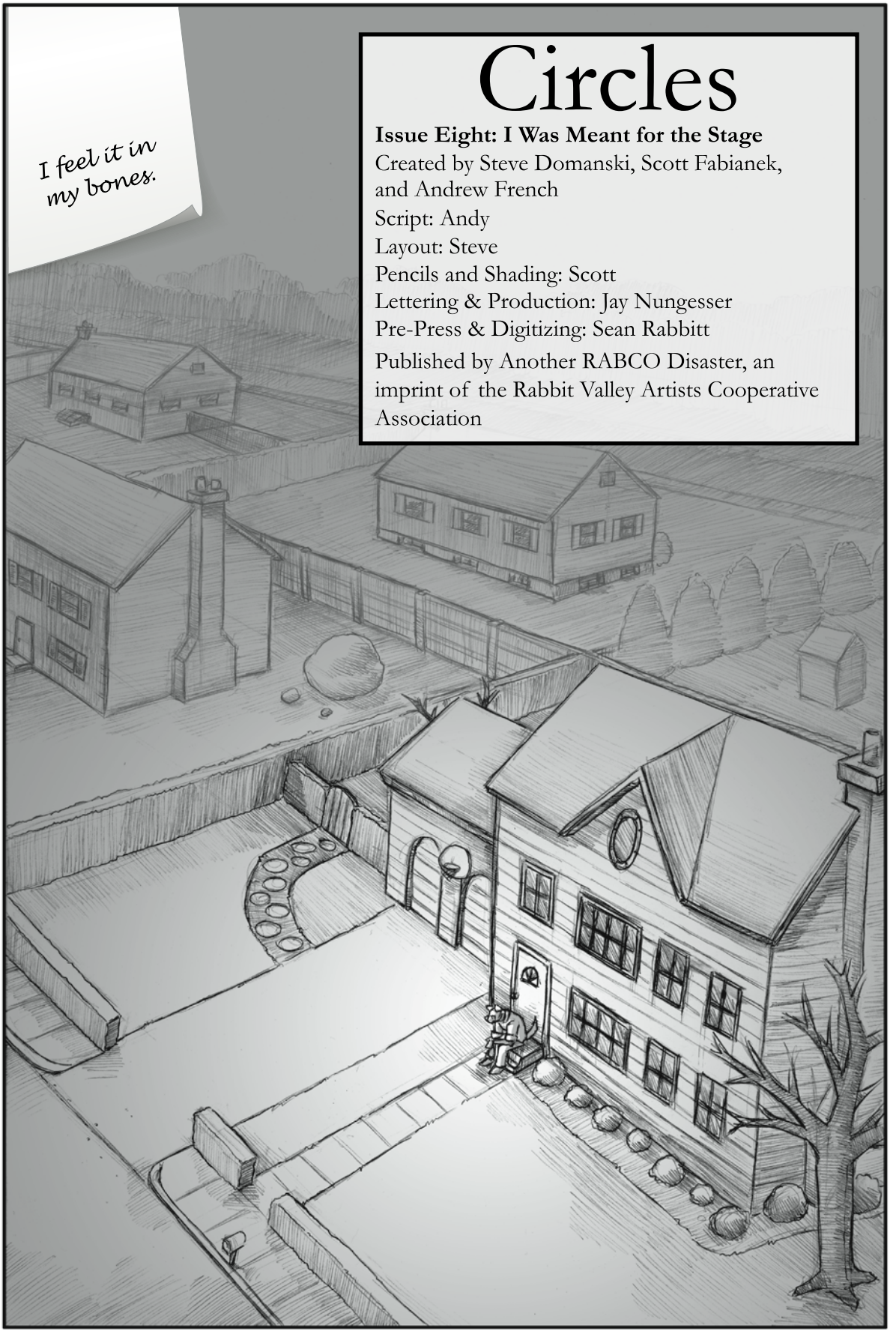
The trees are almost all bare, thanks to some bitter winds that seem to be settling in for a stay. I don't mind telling you that I feel them more than ever at my age.

Jason doesn't seem to be getting into more fights, thank goodness. Maybe he's established himself more fully as someone that the other kids don't want to bother.


Ken's continuing absence is like a big ache in my heart. I keep asking myself if I should've pushed him so hard the night he left. Maybe if I hadn't risen to the bait, he'd still be safe and sound.
But you keep reminding me that Ken's a grown-up. He makes his own decisions, and he has to live with the concequences of them.


The rent checks stopped coming the month after he moved out, and it's been two months since then. But that really doesn't matter. Ken's still family to me. Families fight. I know that. But to shut your family off without a word... to keep away from the people who love you... I can't understand that at all.

All I know is that I feel like there's a storm coming.



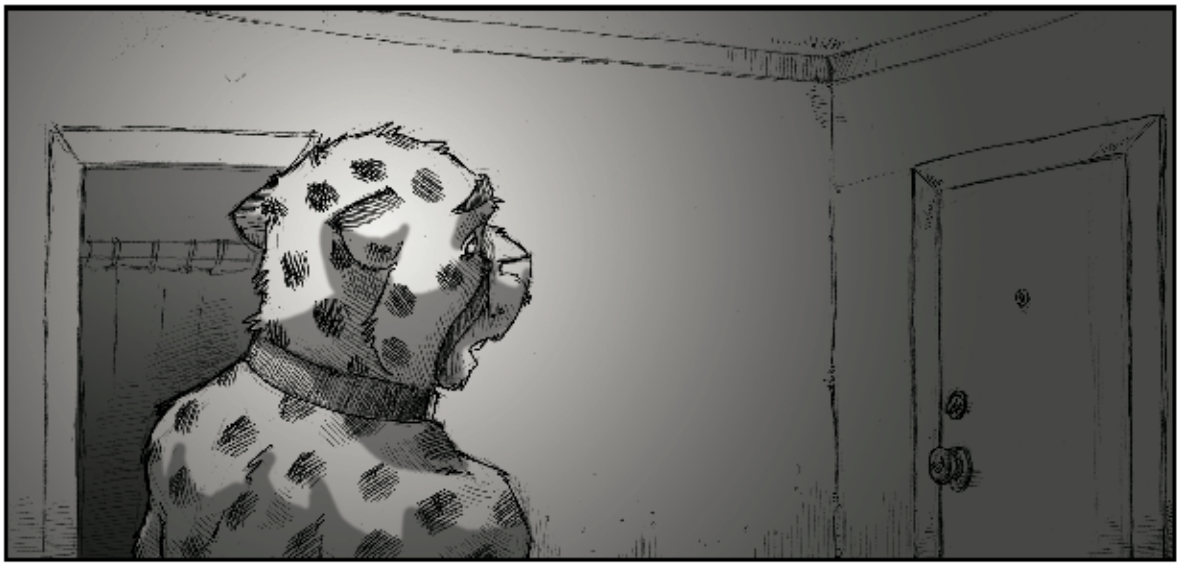
Circles

Issue Eight: I Was Meant for the Stage

Created by Steve Domanski, Scott Fabianek, and Andrew French
Script: Andy
Layout: Steve
Pencils and Shading: Scott
Lettering & Production: Jay Nungesser
Pre-Press & Digitizing: Sean Rabbitt
Published by Another RABCO Disaster, an imprint of the Rabbit Valley Artists Cooperative Association

...28... 29... 30.
So how many reps was that?
Wha..?
Oh... umm...
I kinda lost count.
Yeah, no shit. You been starin' out that window instead of keepin' your attention focused where it belongs.
What's out there that's so innerestin', anyway?
Just a storm coming up. I was thinking, really.
Sounds dangerous.
Bo, seriously... these last few months. They've really been somethin'. You've shown me a lot of stuff about myself...

S'right. You're my boy, ain'tcha?
Well... I... yeah. But I just... I haven't been to the gym in ages...
We got all this work-out stuff here.
And I should really try to get some more modeling gigs. I've hardly done any since I've been here. I'm not making any money.
You know I c'n take care o' you.
And frankly, I just miss folks... y'know, Paulie said...
Look, Boy, you got me. If you got me, you don't need that other stuff. Ain't I good for you?
Well... yeah. It's been a great time. It's just...
Well, good then. C'mere and wash my back, Boy.

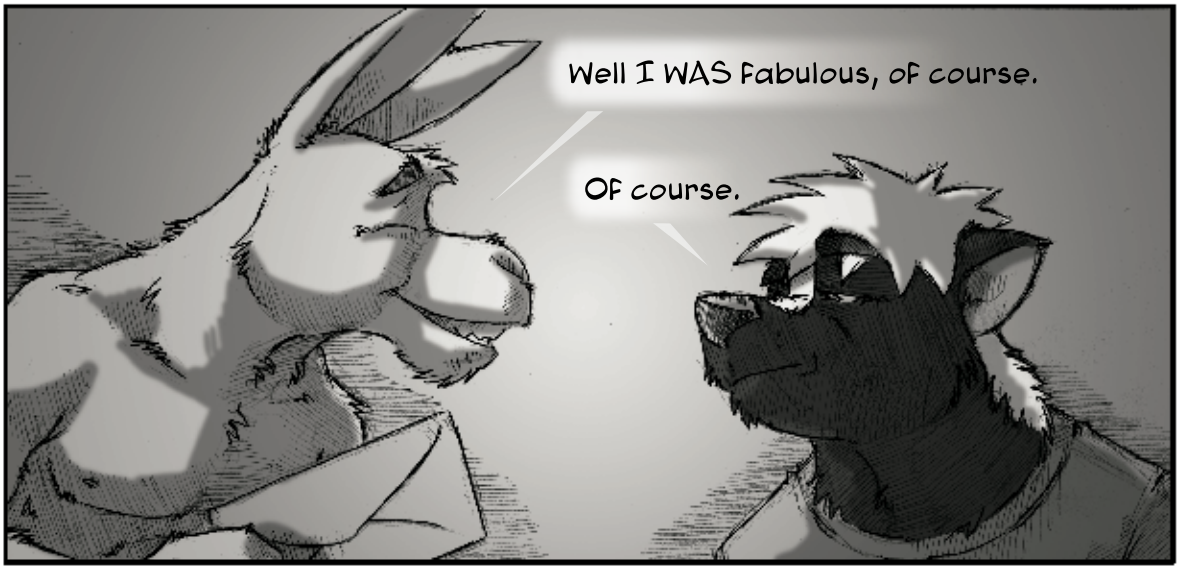


sigh
Yessir.
Be right there.

Ugh. Have I ever told you how much I despise yard work?
Mmmhmm. About every time Paulie asks us to help with yard work.
Well I mean! I'll do laundry, dish washing, mopping... I'll even do windows! But yard work? Blech!
Well, Paulie asked, and you know he never asks for much...
Well, Ken used to always help with...
Yeah.
Less said there, the better. Any good mail?

Well, I got my Book Club newsletter; my copy of Dragon...
Yeah, okay, Mr. Gygax. I said GOOD mail?
My copy of Gourmet. Oh, and you got a letter.
Yeah? From anyone interesting?
From Carroll Wynn. Isn't he...
...that director guy?

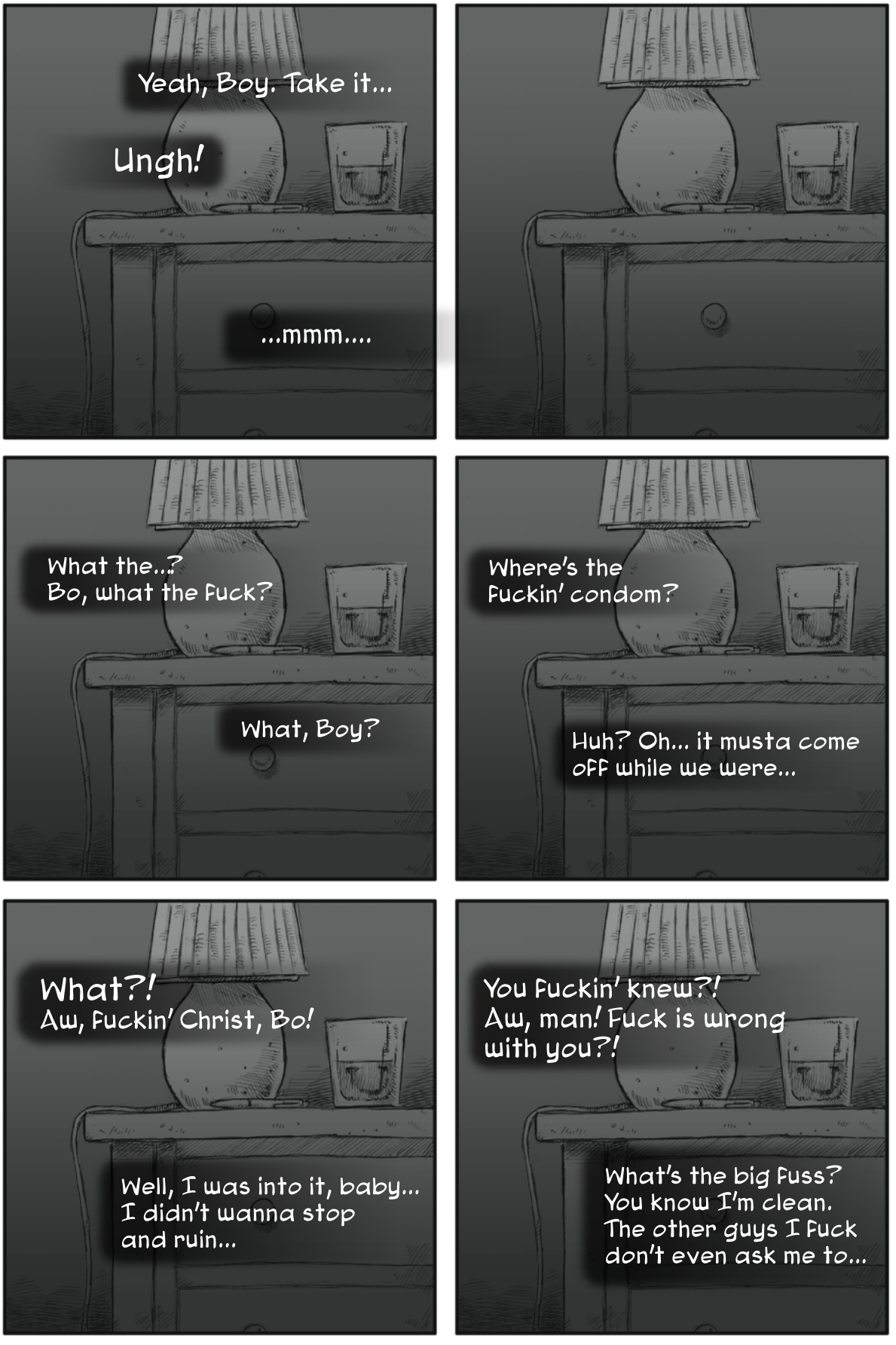
He's directing that revival of Ragtime that's touring in a few months. I auditioned when I was in New York, remember?
Uh-huh. Think you got a part?


Well I WAS fabulous, of course.
Of course.

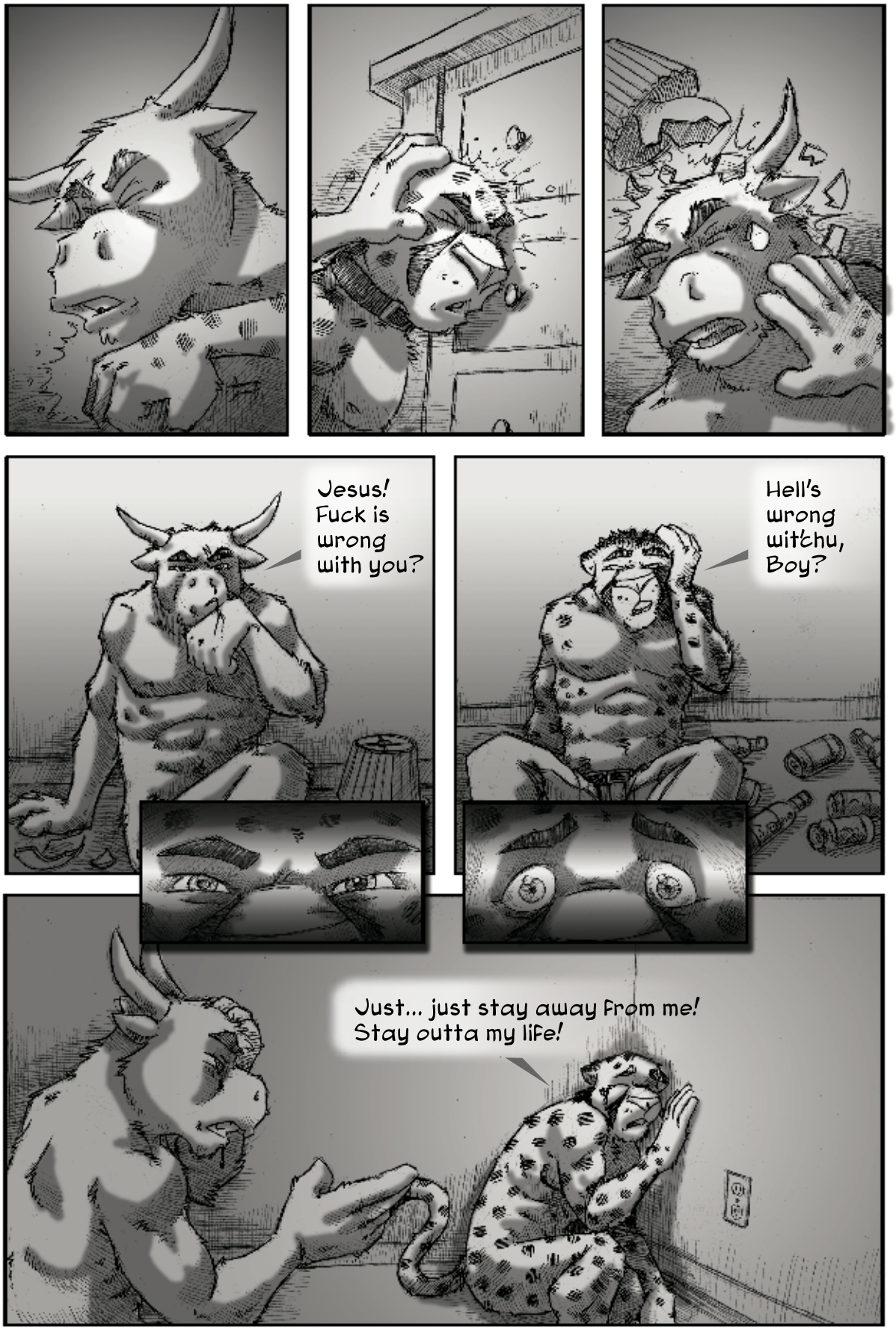
Probably wants me to be in the company when they come through Boston.

It's a good show. I'll get you tickets. Maybe I'll get to understudy for..

AIIIEEEEEE!!!
Gahh!
AIEEEEEE!!!
Well, is it good news?


Yeah, Boy. Take it...
Ungh!
...mmm....
What the...?
Bo, what the Fuck?
What, Boy?
Where's the
Fuckin' condom?
Huh? Oh... it musta come
off while we were...
What?!
Aw, Fuckin' Christ, Bo!
Well, I was into it, baby...
I didn't wanna stop
and ruin...
You Fuckin' knew?!
Aw, man! Fuck is wrong
with you?!
What's the big Fuss?
You know I'm clean.
The other guys I Fuck
don't even ask me to...

Other guys? What the fuck are you talkin' about?
Well, I got some other shit goin' on, y'know. On some nights when you been at photo shoots an' shit.
I do not fuckin' believe this!
What? What th' fuck's your problem?
You've been fucking other guys. That's my fuckin' problem!
Oh, yeah, like YOU'RE suddenly a fuckin' prude.
I been with guys, yeah. Lotta guys. But always one at a time! An' always playin' safe!
What the fuck you think you're doin'?
Fuck's it look like? I'm outta here!
Fuck you are. You're mine!


Jesus! Fuck is wrong with you?
Hell's wrong witchu, Boy?
Just... just stay away from me! Stay outta my life!

It's the role of Mother's Younger Brother. It's a great role!
That's a name for a role?

It is in this show. Oh, Paulie... he's got two solos... or almost solos. He's got parts in most of the big songs and scenes. It's a fabulous role!

What's the play about,anyhow?
Whew! What ISN'T it about? Racism. Class struggles. Relationships drifting apart and coming together.
And it's a musical?

Hey, if they can make musicals about cannibalistic barbers or the wives of South American dictators...
Cannibalistic barbers? Wicked cool!

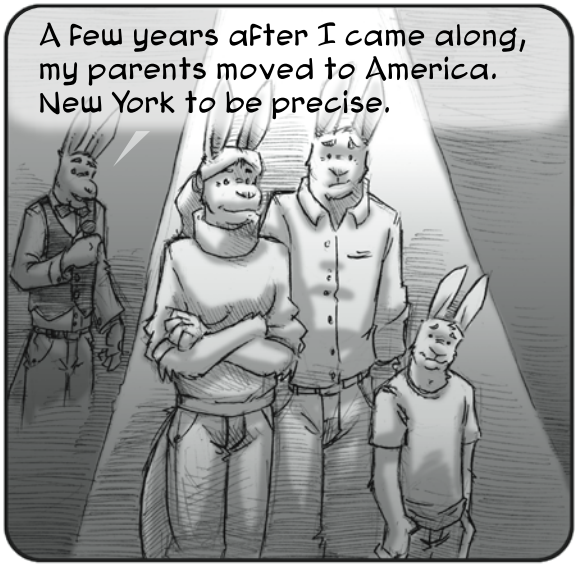
Decent money, too. But there's just one problem.
What's that, dear?

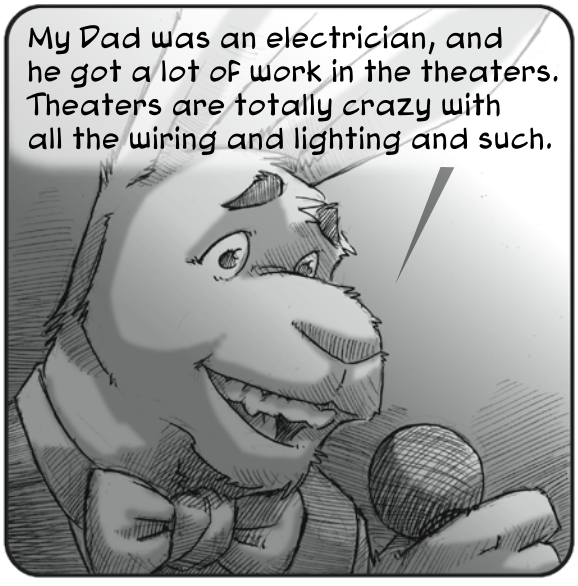
Well, it's a touring company. They get the company members in the individual cities, but the principals travel from place to place. And... well... this is a principal role.
Well, that's cool. How long's the run?
Err.. nine months.
Oh, dear. That is a long time.
Yeah... yeah, it is.
Would you be gone that whole time?
Well... probably not the whole time. But a good chunk of it. We get some breaks between cities, and I could fly back here for those.
Well, are you gonna do it?
Oh, Teddy Bear. I don't wanna be away from you that long.
But this is what you always wanted, isn't it?
Kinda.

PLAYBILL
The Life of
FLASHBACK!
Taylor Dooley

ACT 1
AUSTRALIA
TO
AMERICA

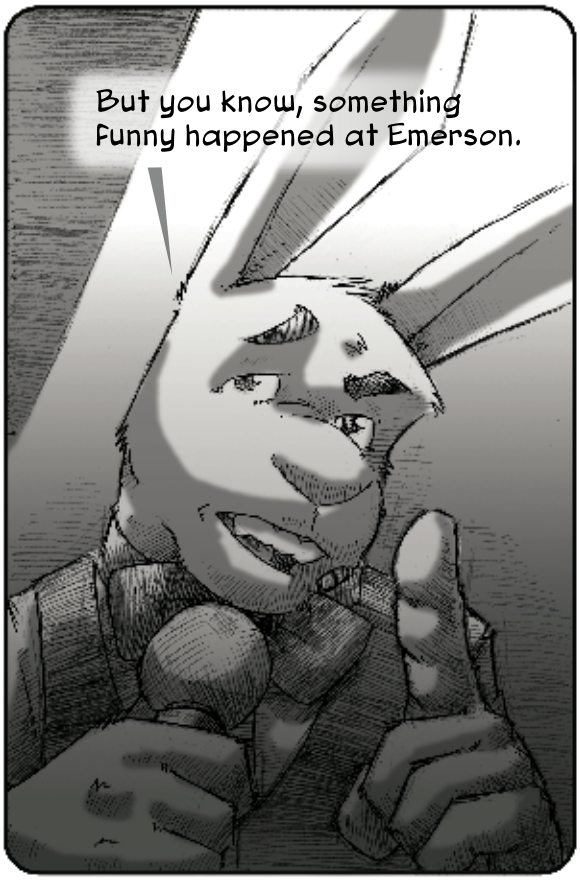
You know I was born in Australia. But that didn't last long.


A few years after I came along, my parents moved to America. New York to be precise.

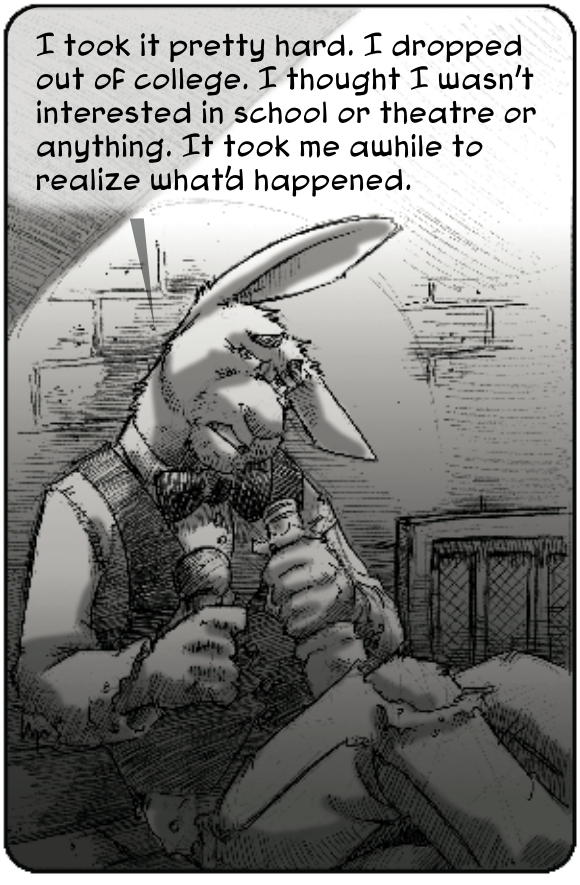

My Dad was an electrician, and he got a lot of work in the theaters. Theaters are totally crazy with all the wiring and lighting and such.

And sometimes I got to go with him. When I was about... oh... eight, I got to go to the Met with him, when he was fixing their lighting panels.

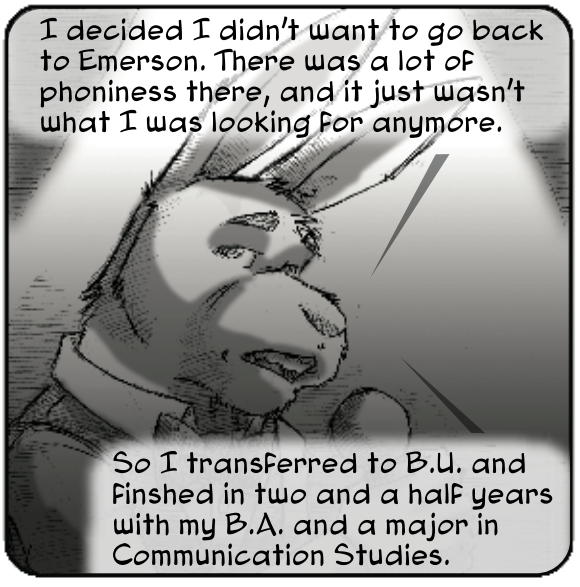
And while he was busy fixing it, I walked out onto the stage, and looked out into the darkened house, at all the empty seats.
It was like I suddenly knew where I belonged. On stage.
After that, I was gung-ho into my future life. I took singing lessons, dancing lessons, acting lessons...
I was good, too! I got any role I went out for, all the way through High School. And I went out for a lot of roles!
I would've loved to go to Julliard, but that never quite manifested. When High School was over, I headed to Boston.... and my destiny!
Emerson College... one of the most prestigious communication colleges, with one of the biggest theatre departments anywhere!
EMERSON
Got a dorm room. Took some classes. Lost my virginity there. Hey, being gay was almost a course requirement, seemed like.


But you know, something funny happened at Emerson.

I sucked. I didn't get a single role I went out for. Not once in the two years I was there.


I took it pretty hard. I dropped out of college. I thought I wasn't interested in school or theatre or anything. It took me awhile to realize what'd happened.

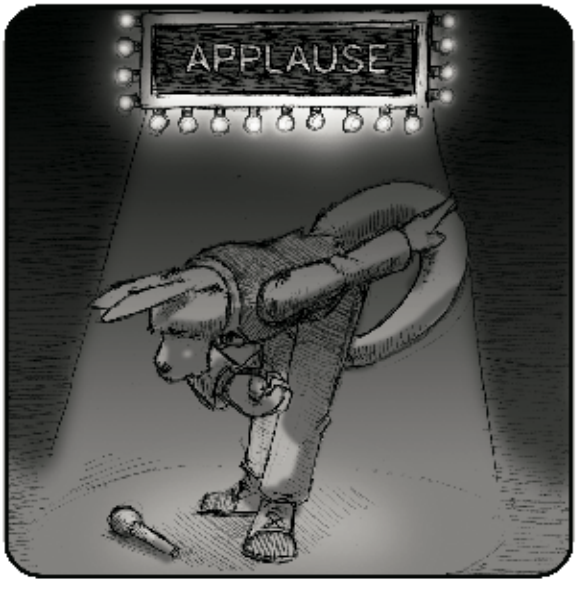
Back in High School, I'd been a big fish in a little pond. But now, I was just another hopeful, struggling theatre major. Just one of many.


I decided I didn't want to go back to Emerson. There was a lot of phoniness there, and it just wasn't what I was looking for anymore.
So I transferred to B.U. and finshed in two and a half years with my B.A. and a major in Communication Studies.

And yeah, I'm waiting tables and taking small roles in the choruses of touring companies and bigger roles in regional theatre.

But I have you guys here. My family. And there's nowhere else that I'd rather be.

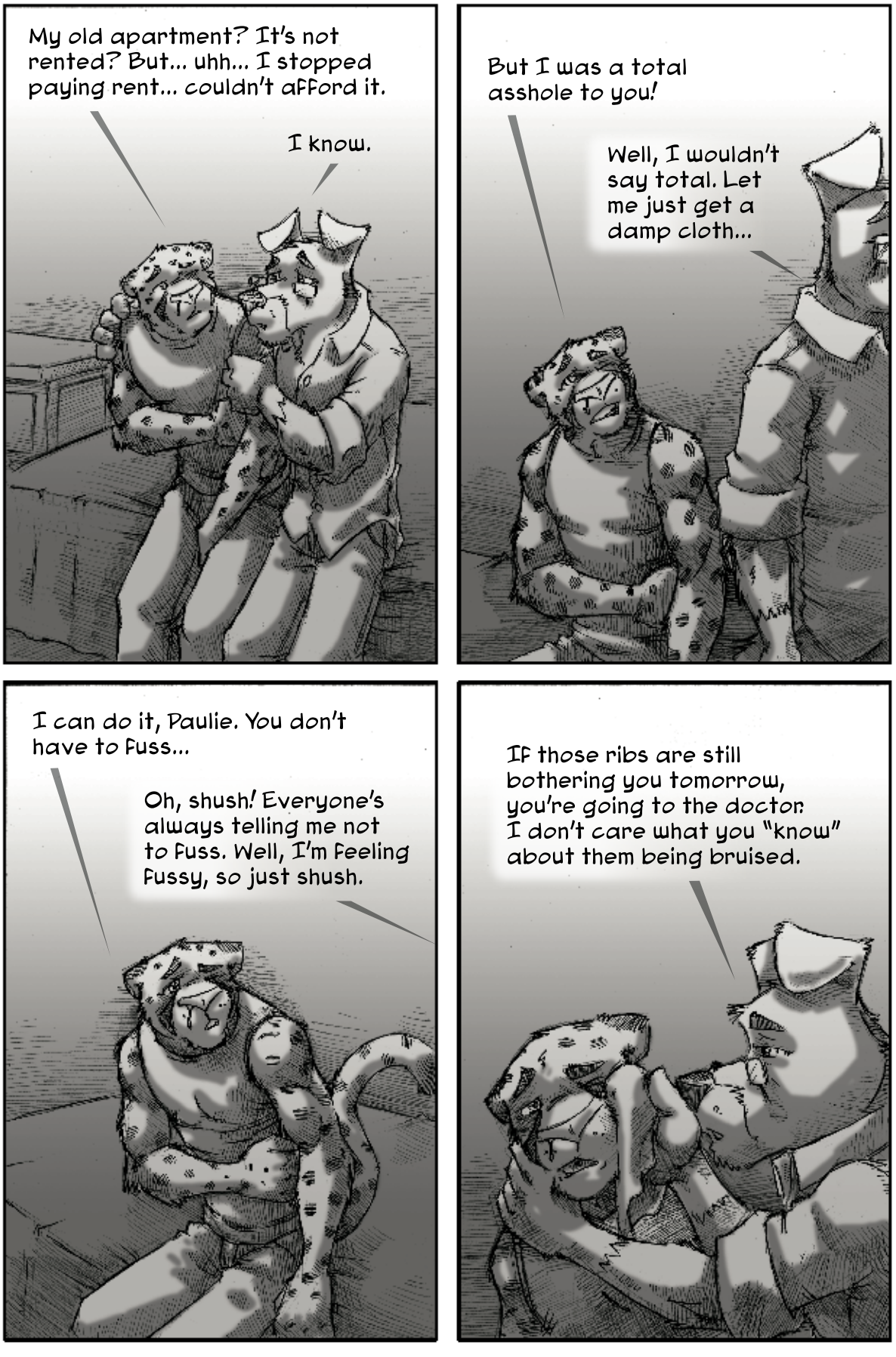
You guys make me feel like a star.


APPLAUSE

Does that mean you're not taking the part?
I didn't say that.
Well, dear, I...
Eh? Was that the doorbell in Ken's apartment?
Huh? I didn't hear anything.
I'll just go check.
So, are you gonna...
I don't know yet!

P-Paulie?
Ken? Oh my God!
It... it's okay... I...

Ken, did that guy do this to you? Do you want me to call the cops?
No... no cops. I did as bad to him, really. Heh... uh... you were right about him, though. Of course.
Ken, come on inside... let's get that nose looked at. Are you having trouble breathing? You look like you're holding yourself.
Had enough bruised ribs to know... ow... they're jus' bruised. Not broken.
Careful now, dear.
If you gotta couch I can crash on...

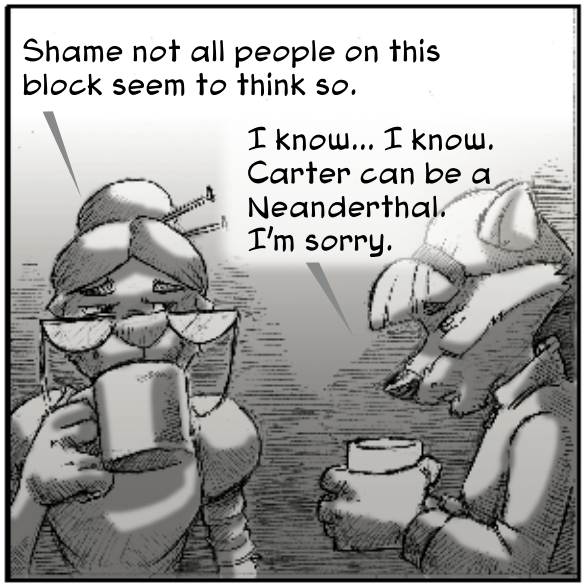

My old apartment? It's not rented? But... uhh... I stopped paying rent... couldn't afford it.
I know.
But I was a total asshole to you!
Well, I wouldn't say total. Let me just get a damp cloth...
I can do it, Paulie. You don't have to fuss...
Oh, shush! Everyone's always telling me not to fuss. Well, I'm feeling fussy, so just shush.
If those ribs are still bothering you tomorrow, you're going to the doctor. I don't care what you "know" about them being bruised.

You don't worry about rent 'til you're back on your feet.
But... why is my stuff still here?
I don't give up on my family that easily, dear.

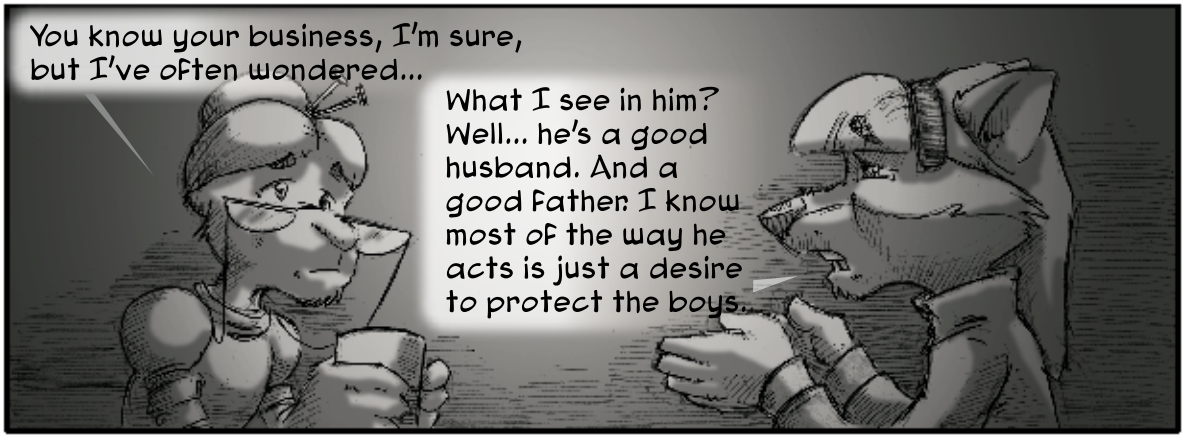
Thanks again for watching the boys, Esther.

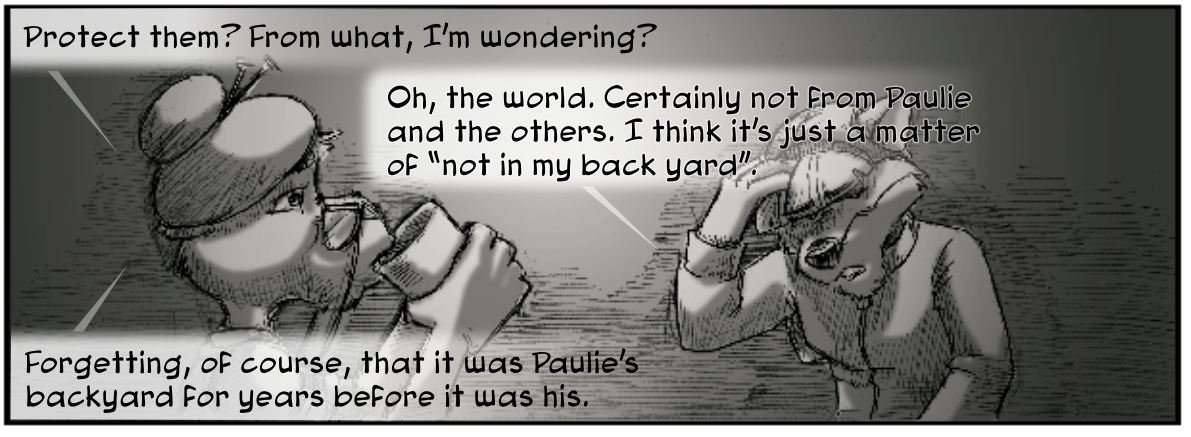
Ach. Please don't even mention it, Josie. Such a pleasure watching those boys.
Well, it's a relief not to have them underfoot ALL the time.

Really, they're welcome any time. Truly, Jason did all the entertaining.
He really is a lovely boy.

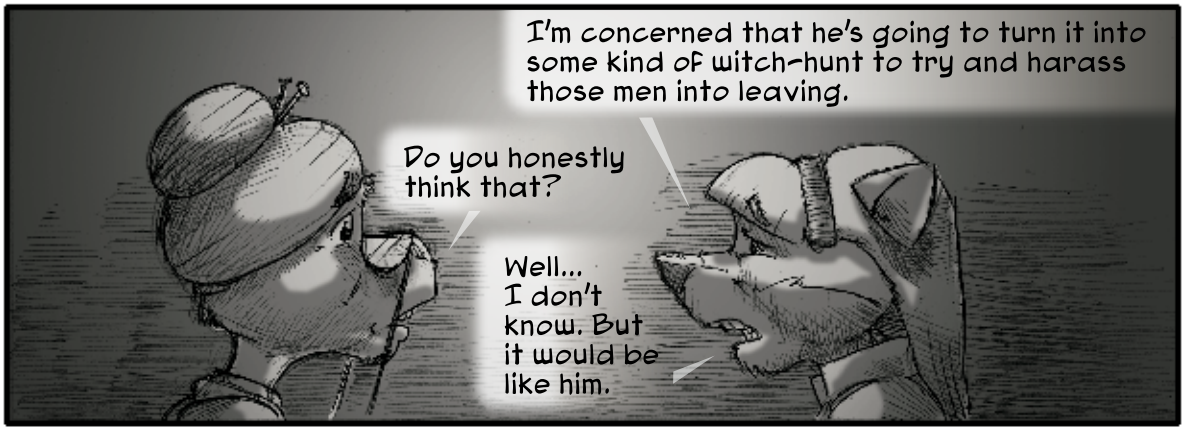

Shame not all people on this block seem to think so.
I know... I know. Carter can be a Neanderthal. I'm sorry.

Not for you to be apologizing for him. He is what he is. Thank God the boys have you as an example, too.
Well, I try to off-set him. I just wish he could get out from this Medieval mindset he has.

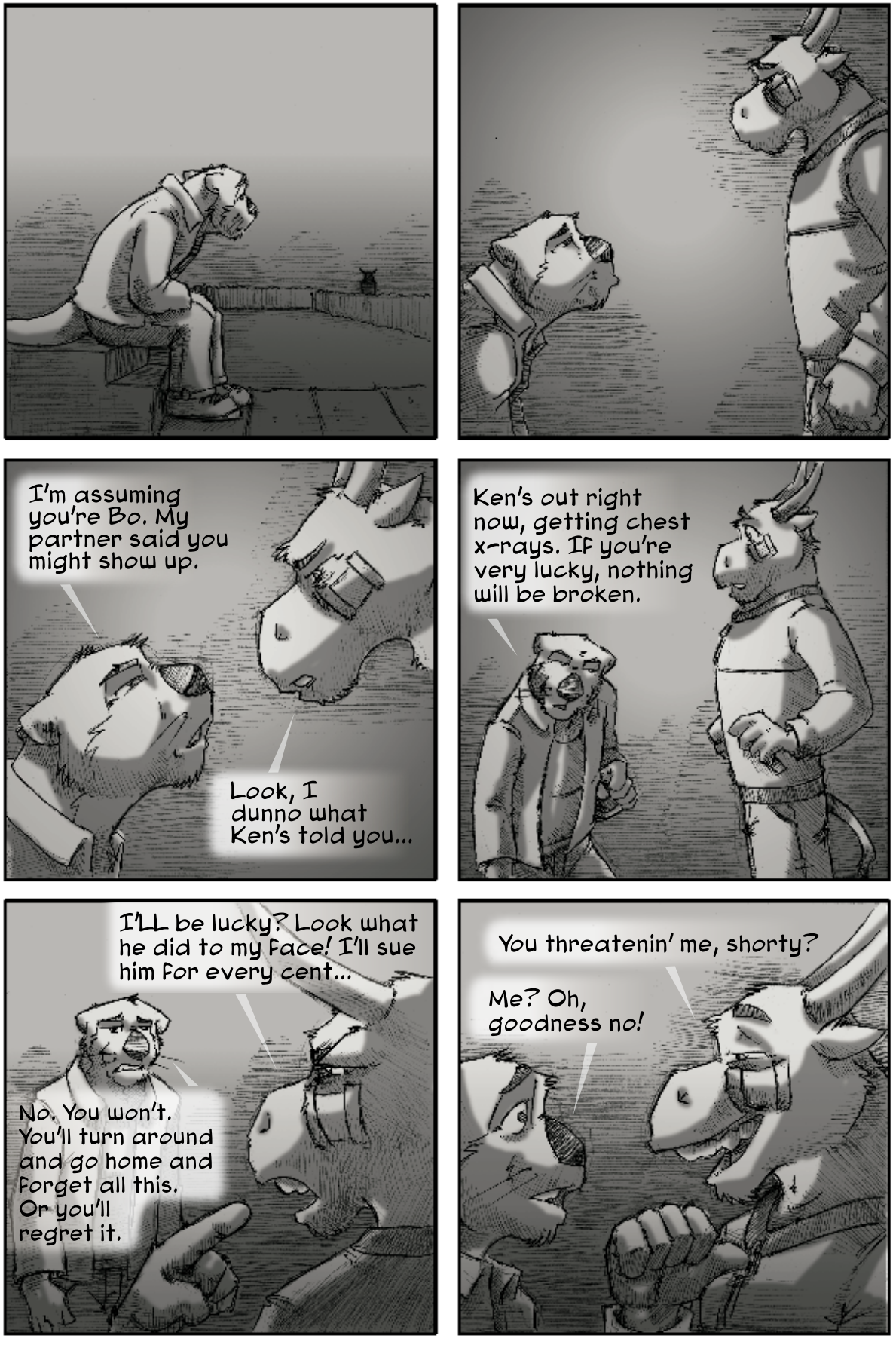

You know your business, I'm sure, but I've often wondered...
What I see in him? Well... he's a good husband. And a good father. I know most of the way he acts is just a desire to protect the boys.


Protect them? From what, I'm wondering?
Oh, the world. Certainly not from Paulie and the others. I think it's just a matter of "not in my back yard".
Forgetting, of course, that it was Paulie's backyard for years before it was his.

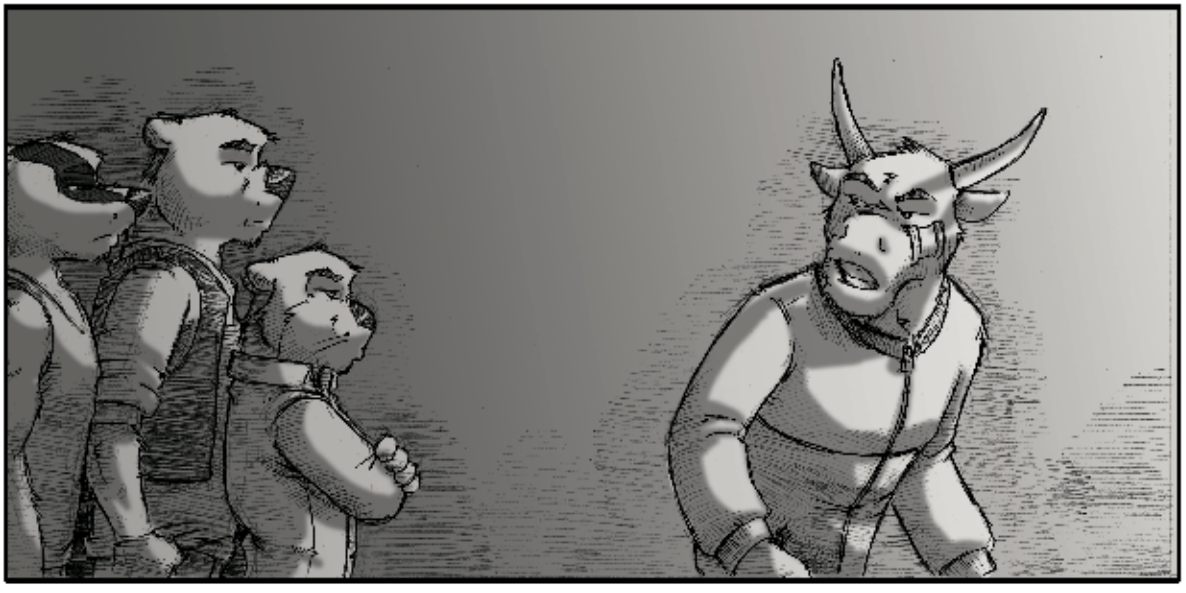
Yeah, he's good at forgetting things like that. Do you know, he's actually putting together a committee to promote and improve the neighborhood's welfare, and he hasn't invited anyone from their house. Can you believe that?
Tragically, I can believe this, yes. My household, also, seems to have been overlooked with the invitations.


I'm concerned that he's going to turn it into some kind of witch-hunt to try and harass those men into leaving.
Do you honestly think that?
Well... I don't know. But it would be like him.

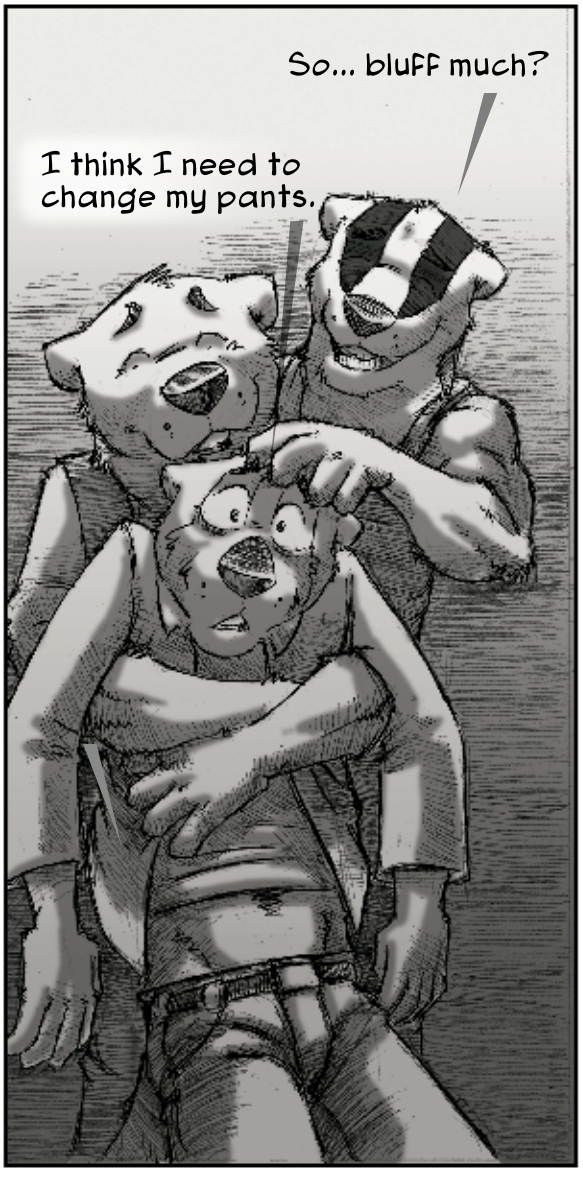
I wouldn't want you to have to waste your time...
Well, someone has to keep an eye on him...
Oh, my poor husband.
He'll never know what's hit him!
clink

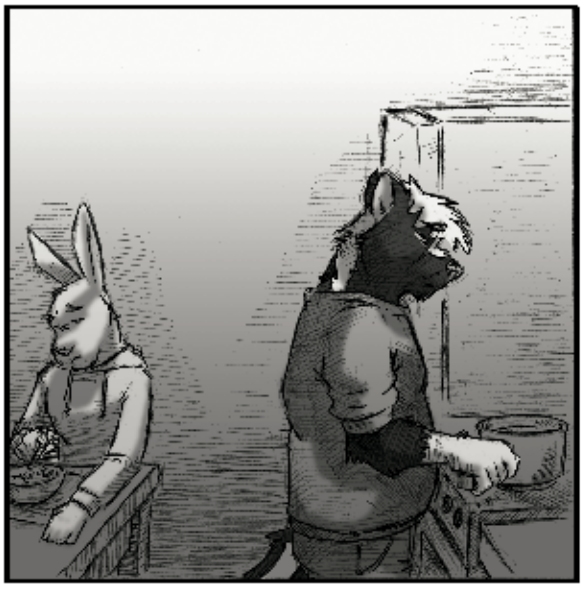

I'm assuming you're Bo. My partner said you might show up.
Look, I dunno what Ken's told you...
Ken's out right now, getting chest x-rays. If you're very lucky, nothing will be broken.
I'LL be lucky? Look what he did to my face! I'll sue him for every cent...
No. You won't. You'll turn around and go home and forget all this. Or you'll regret it.
You threatenin' me, shorty?
Me? Oh, goodness no!

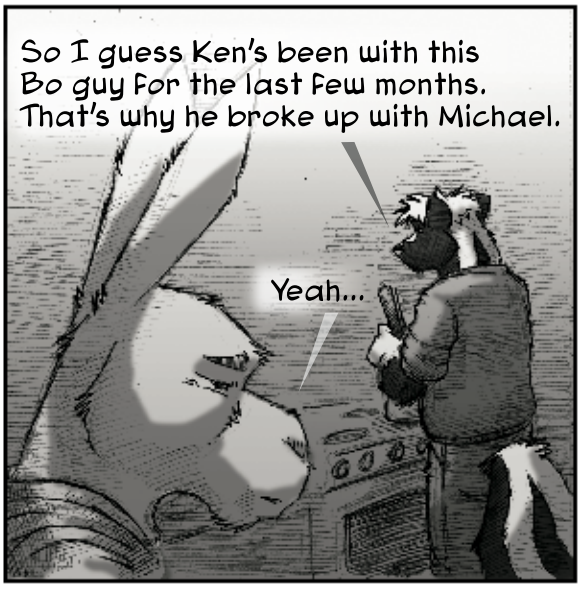
WE'RE threatening you. You set foot on this porch, and you'll get the beating you deserve.
And after that, what you'll get are tresspassing charges, added to a pretty solid harassment suit.
You won't make that stick...
Really? You're twice Ken's size, and he may have busted ribs. What're you gonna plead? Self-defense?
What're you? A lawyer?
Nope. I'm a CPA. But one of my best friends is a lawyer, and she hates bullies.
Now get the fuck out of here, and never bug Ken again, or I'll make it my job to make the rest of your life a living legal Hell.



Whatever. Tell that asshole to watch his step.

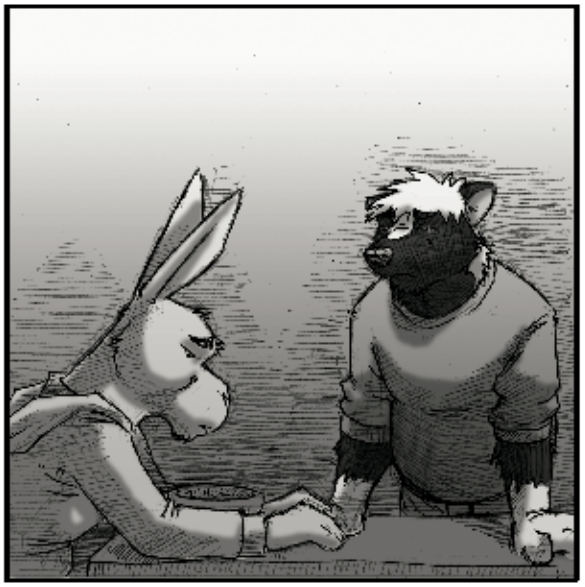

So... bluff much?
I think I need to change my pants.




So I guess Ken's been with this Bo guy for the last few months. That's why he broke up with Michael.
Yeah...

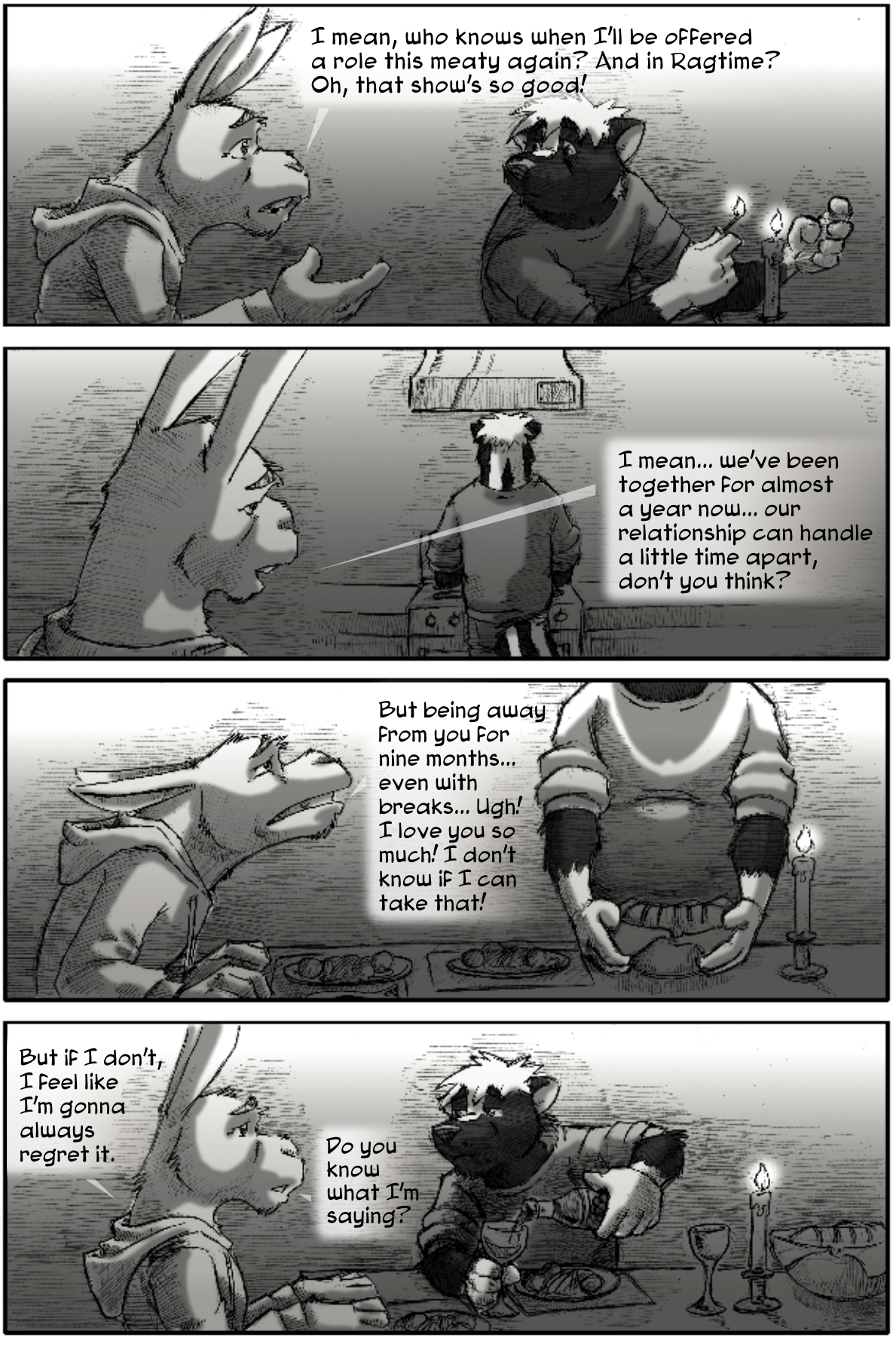
I saw Ken when he got back from the hospital. His ribs were just bruised, but can you imagine that happening?
Yeah...

Really? I mean, I know Ken isn't always on the top of everyone's list of nicest people, but he's been cool with me since we went to the gym, and...
Yeah...

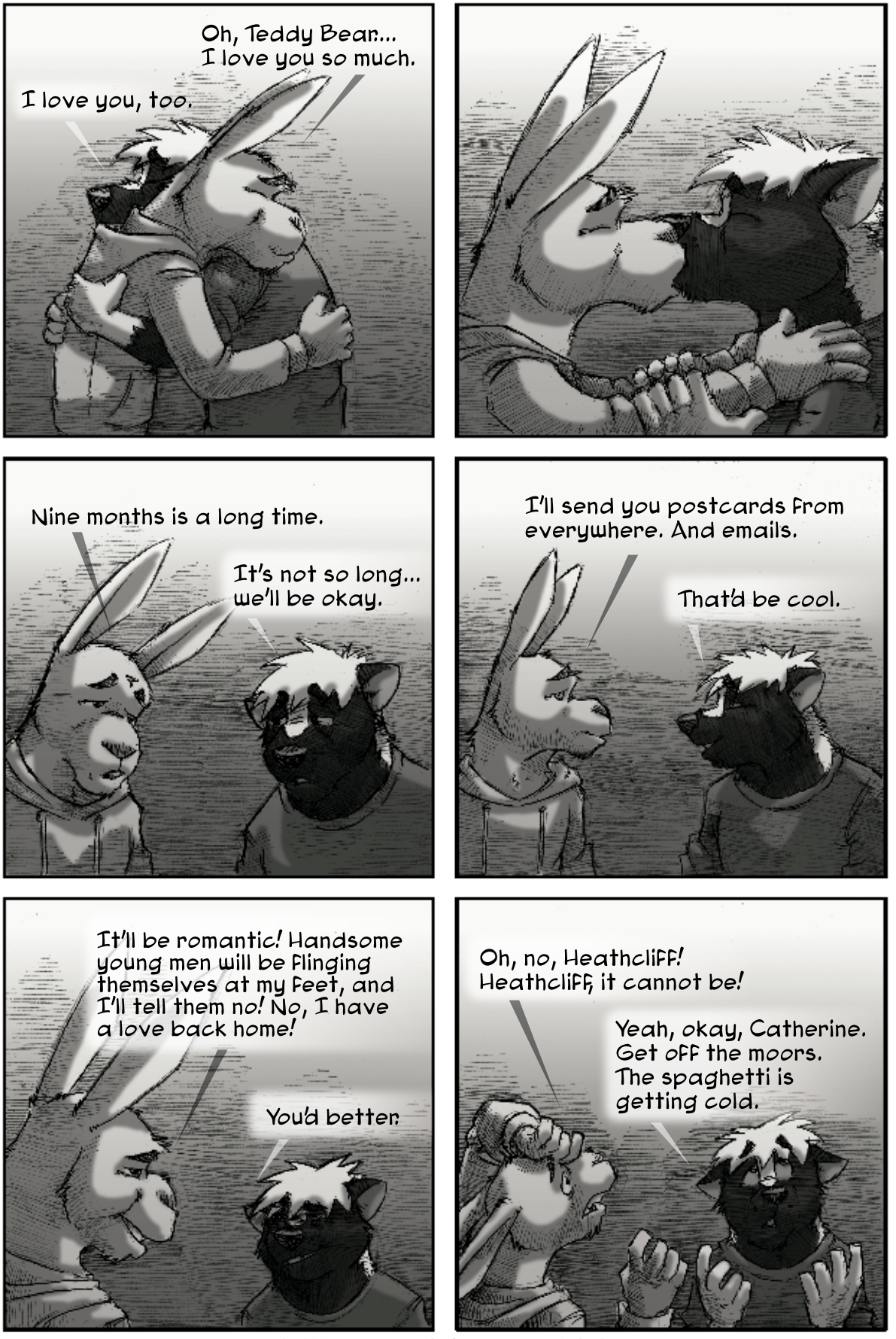


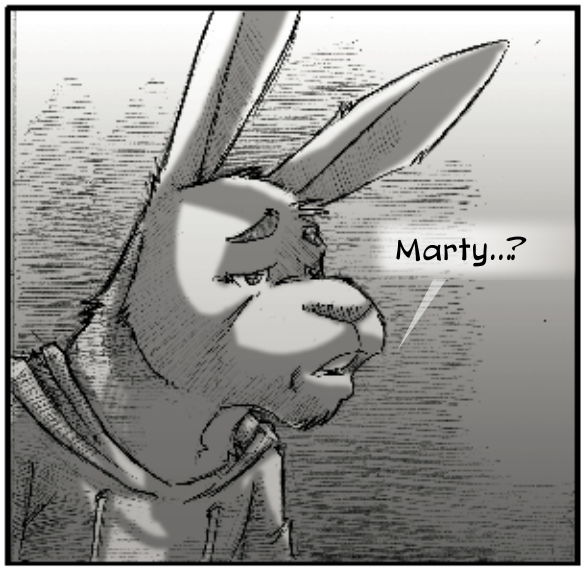
Your hair's on fire.
Yeah...

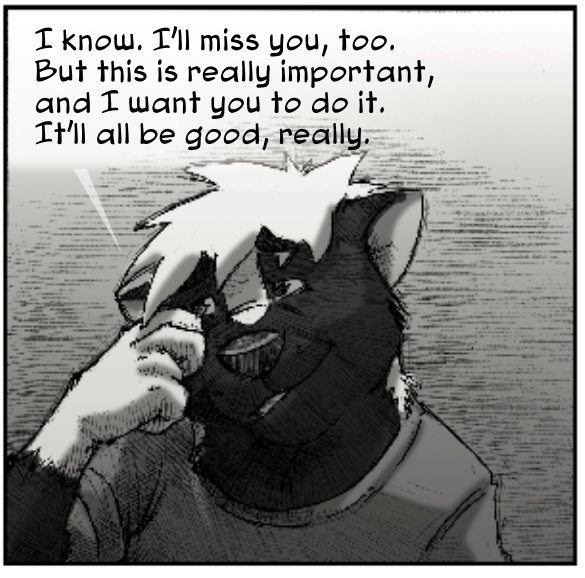
Wha?
Oh... sorry, Teddy Bear. I hate to be so self-absorbed. I've just got a lot on my mind.
Well, share. I'm pretty sure that listening is in the boyfriend job description.
Well, I've just been off in another world since I got that letter.
It's been one regional bit part after another. If I'm ever going to make it as an actor, I have to pursue these big roles.

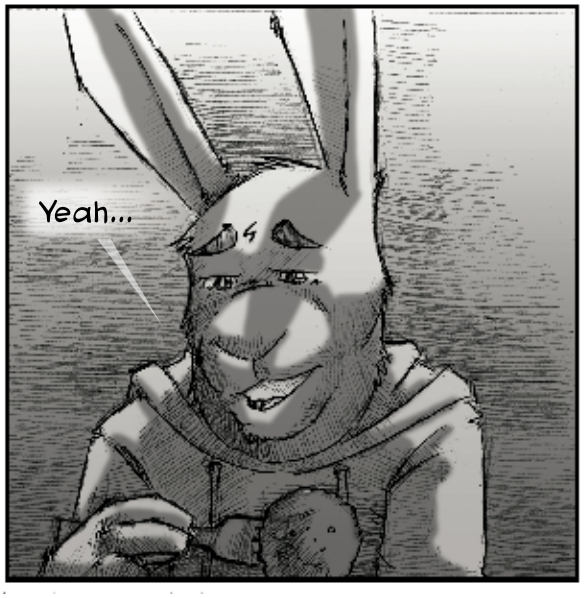

I mean, who knows when I'll be offered a role this meaty again? And in Ragtime? Oh, that show's so good!
I mean... we've been together for almost a year now... our relationship can handle a little time apart, don't you think?
But being away from you for nine months... even with breaks... Ugh! I love you so much! I don't know if I can take that!
But if I don't, I feel like I'm gonna always regret it.
Do you know what I'm saying?

When did you do all this?
Taye. I WANT you to take the role.
I know, but it's really important to me, and....
Wait... did you just say you wanted me to...?
Well, I don't want you to go away, obviously.
Hmph! You'd better not!
But this is a big chance for you! If you stayed, forget about YOU always regretting it. I'D always regret it... because I'd be afraid you gave up something awesome just to stay with me.
Oh, Teddy Bear.
Look... I love seeing you in shows. You're always the star to me. But you deserve to have everyone else see that, too!

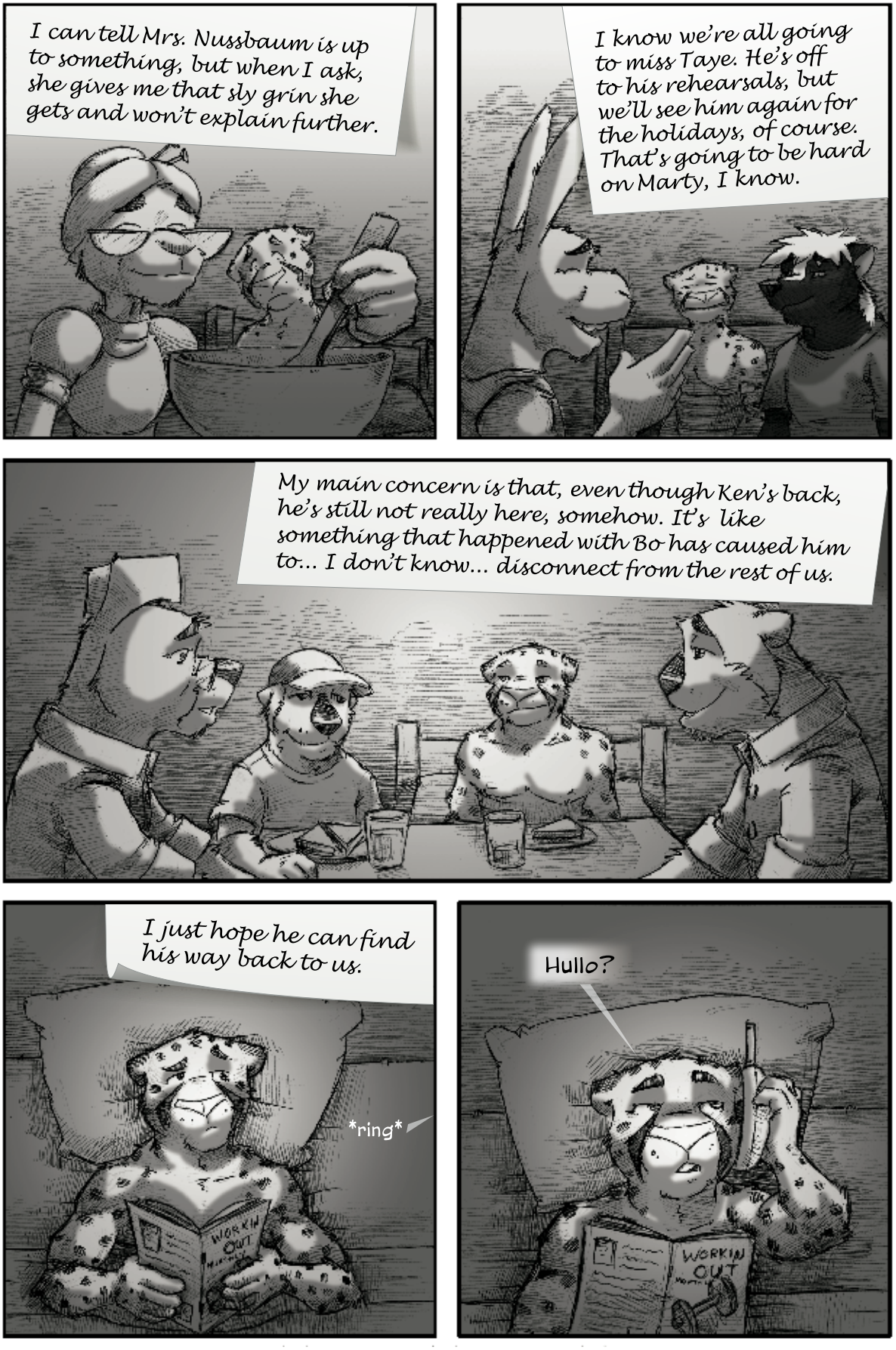

Oh, Teddy Bear... I love you so much.
I love you, too.
Nine months is a long time.
It's not so long... we'll be okay.
I'll send you postcards from everywhere. And emails.
That'd be cool.
It'll be romantic! Handsome young men will be flinging themselves at my feet, and I'll tell them no! No, I have a love back home!
You'd better.
Oh, no, Heathcliff! Heathcliff, it cannot be!
Yeah, okay, Catherine. Get off the moors. The spaghetti is getting cold.


Marty..?


I know. I'll miss you, too.
But this is really important,
and I want you to do it.
It'll all be good, really.


Yeah...

Dear Douglas,
Well, we have Ken back, thank God. He doesn't seem to talk much about what happened with him and Bo, and I'm not pushing for details. I'm just glad he came back.


I can tell Mrs. Nussbaum is up to something, but when I ask, she gives me that sly grin she gets and won't explain further.
I know we're all going to miss Taye. He's off to his rehearsals, but we'll see him again for the holidays, of course. That's going to be hard on Marty, I know.
My main concern is that, even though Ken's back, he's still not really here, somehow. It's like something that happened with Bo has caused him to... I don't know... disconnect from the rest of us.
I just hope he can find his way back to us.
ring
WORKIN OUT
Hullo?
WORKIN OUT

Yes, hello, Dr. Gibbs. This is Ken.
The test results? Uh huh?
Okay... you're sure?
No, no. Really, that's great news. Thanks for calling.

No one should ever have to be that alone.
Love, Paulie.

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